

Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Reconciliation Action Plan 2010-12

Annual progress report for the year 2010-11

Our vision for reconciliation

The Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy (the department) is committed to bridging the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and other Australians. The department recognises and respects the unique history and culture of Indigenous Australians, as well as the importance of working together to create an inclusive society. The department aims to be an employer of choice and provide equitable access to employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians within the department. Knowledge about Indigenous culture is paramount to designing programs and policy that the department delivers for the Australian Government that affect Indigenous people. We believe that committing to the process of reconciliation will enable the department to be more effective in delivering our business outcomes and will assist in building a workforce that reflects the diversity of the Australian community.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan for 2010-12

The 2010-12 Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) outlines a range of strategies to enable the department to realise its vision for reconciliation. It operates in conjunction with the department's Indigenous Employment Plan and Workplace Diversity statement. The RAP identifies practical measures that the department can take to enhance opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Our continued focus and commitment to the process of reconciliation enables effectiveness in delivering our business outcomes. During 2010-11 the department met with Reconciliation Australia and discussed its preference for removing actions that were part of the department's usual or core business. As a result, a refresh of the RAP will concentrate on actions to promote reconciliation that complement our policy and program activities.

Summary and key learnings

This RAP Annual Progress Report covers the period July 2010-June 2011. Following are some of the lessons learnt for our RAP journey that we will use to inform the refreshing of our RAP for 2011-13.

Positive outcomes of the RAP include an increased awareness of Indigenous issues amongst staff of the department which was reinforced by the new Indigenous Cultural Awareness training being provided by the department. The department developed a new Indigenous Employment Plan for 2011-13 with the theme 'two worlds...respect the past, embrace the future...' Also, there was an increase in the use of Acknowledgement of Country at departmental events and draft cultural guidelines were developed.

Activities undertaken during National Aborigines and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) week were very well received and increased awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues across the organisation more broadly.

As outlined above, a key learning in working with Reconciliation Australia was to move our focus away from existing actions that related to Indigenous policy and program initiatives and focus more on activities within the department that support reconciliation. The refreshed RAP will take into account and build on our achievements and lessons learnt over the 2010-11 year.

Relationships: build inclusive relationships with Indigenous Australia to improve the delivery of the department's policy and programs

Focus area: discussion with Indigenous representatives about policy and program design, development, coordination and delivery

Action	Target	Actual progress	Lessons learned	Stop light
<p>Consult with Indigenous Australian stakeholders in rural, regional and remote areas to develop strategies to identify and reduce barriers to access and use of communications services.</p> <p>The department will continue to participate in the Indigenous Communications Group with other states and territories. They are a working group of the Online and Communications Ministerial Council (see www.occ.gov.au for further information). This group offers a mechanism for consultation with Indigenous communities to inform higher level policy and program development across Australian state, territory and local government.</p> <p>The department will implement consultation guidelines to improve consultation processes with Indigenous communities.</p> <p>The department will work collaboratively across government and other sectors to develop, coordinate and deliver products and services for Indigenous Australians.</p> <p>The department will continue to work with the National Partnerships Agreement Framework for 'Closing the Gap' with The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), in addition to building relationships across government and other sectors as part of the Indigenous Communications Group (as outlined above).</p>	<p>Participate in the development and implementation of the Indigenous Communications Group's annual work plan to deliver outcomes under the framework for the provision of communications services to Indigenous communities endorsed by the Online and Communications Council.</p>	<p>The Indigenous Communications Group met twice in this reporting period. A digital opportunities report was drafted.</p> <p>As a result of streamlining the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agenda, the Online and Communications Council (OCC) was disbanded. However an Indigenous Communications Group will remain. It has yet to be reconvened.</p> <p>Streamlining of the COAG agenda has affected the RAP with the cessation of the OCC.</p>	<p>When the Indigenous Communications Group is reconvened, and its role determined, the department will consider the relevance of including an action in its RAP. Until that time, the core business focus of these actions will not be incorporated into the refreshed RAP.</p>	<p>On track</p>

Relationships: build inclusive relationships with Indigenous Australia to improve the delivery of the department's policy and programs

Focus area: discussion with Indigenous representatives about policy and program design, development, coordination and delivery

Action	Target	Actual progress	Lessons learned	Stop light
	<p>Participate in two consultation forums with Indigenous stakeholders organised by the Indigenous Communications Group. The department will use these forums to consult with service providers and Indigenous stakeholders about strategies to identify and reduce barriers to access and use communications services.</p>	<p>Formal consultations were curtailed largely due to the Commonwealth caretaker period. Some discussions and site visits to communities took place and feedback was used to inform the digital opportunities report.</p> <p>As a result of streamlining the COAG agenda, the OCC was disbanded. However an Indigenous Communications Group will remain. It has yet to be reconvened.</p> <p>Streamlining of the COAG agenda has affected the RAP with the cessation of the Online and Communications Council.</p>		
	<p>Develop and implement consultation guidelines to provide direction to the department on how and when to consult with Indigenous Australians in program and policy design, development, coordination and delivery.</p>	<p>These guidelines were not progressed and have been overtaken by the development of the whole-of-government 'Engaging Today, Building Tomorrow' framework for engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.</p>		<p>Not achieved</p>

Relationships: build inclusive relationships with Indigenous Australia to improve the delivery of the department's policy and programs

Focus area: discussion with Indigenous representatives about policy and program design, development, coordination and delivery

Action	Target	Actual progress	Lessons learned	Stop light
	Participate in the development of a document by the Indigenous Communications Group and the OCC to identify the links between improving the availability of communications services to Indigenous Australians and 'closing the gap' in Indigenous disadvantage.	A draft digital opportunities was developed. Due to the OCC being disbanded, this was unable to be progressed. Streamlining of the COAG agenda has affected the RAP with the cessation of the OCC.		On track
Form a RAP working group with stakeholders and an Indigenous staff representative.	The working group is to meet four times a year to monitor and review progress of the plan.	Four meetings have taken place. Three full working group meetings plus one with working group representatives and Reconciliation Australia representative.	Will encourage more representation by continuing to consult with both existing and new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.	Achieved
Implement communications programs that meet the needs of Indigenous Australians and aim to 'close the gap' in Indigenous disadvantage.	Outcomes, outputs and feedback on specific departmental programs that deliver services to Indigenous Australians reported in the Annual Report, including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Communications Program • Satellite Phone Subsidy Scheme • Australian Broadband Guarantee • Community Broadcasting Foundation. 	Delivery of programs and services administered by the department and reported in the Annual Report.	Given this action is 'core' business and reported on elsewhere, based on advice from Reconciliation Australia, this action will be removed from the refreshed RAP.	Achieved

Respect: recognise and value the strengths of Indigenous cultures and identities to build an inclusive and positive workplace culture

Focus area: improving cultural awareness

Action	Target	Actual progress	Lessons learned	Stop light
Celebrate and participate in significant Indigenous cultural and reconciliation events.	The department holds a minimum of one event per year. Departmental events are promoted and all staff are encouraged and supported to attend. Attendance numbers are monitored and feedback is requested, considered and acted on.	Department held well attended celebrations during NAIDOC Week 2010 with an art exhibition/sale; touch football competition and presentation covering 'one laptop per child' initiative. The department raised awareness of the events through an article on its intranet advertising reconciliation week.	Participants were encouraged to participate with events promoted via various intranet pages, news stories, wellbeing calendar and posters. Feedback received was very positive.	Achieved
	The Indigenous intranet pages provide links to information about significant Indigenous and cultural events.	Intranet Indigenous pages contain a link to the Indigenous Newslines magazine as well as Reconciliation Australia.	Intranet pages visited and number of hits have been monitored. The department will continue to promote and develop the page during the process of reviewing and refining the RAP, to make it a more useful resource for employees.	Achieved
Develop Indigenous intranet pages to promote and encourage an inclusive culture in the department.	Indigenous intranet pages are available, promoted to and used by staff. We will monitor the number of page hits to assess the level of usage and effectiveness of the site.	Number of hits between 1 July 2010- 16 June 2011: 1082 Indigenous pages (includes training and services, permits for travelling to/through communities and protocol for acknowledgement/welcome to country, and above links).	Intranet pages visited and number of hits have been monitored. It is difficult to gather statistics for individual pages. The department will continue to promote and develop the page during the process of reviewing and refining the RAP to gauge the level of interest within the department.	Achieved
	Request feedback from all staff on improvements or additions to the Intranet pages and consider and act on it.	Intranet pages contain mechanisms to allow for voluntary feedback by staff.		Achieved
Raise staff awareness of Indigenous Australian peoples and cultures by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> continuing to offer Indigenous cultural awareness 	Indigenous cultural awareness training to all staff to continue as part of department's core	A review of cultural awareness training was undertaken following feedback supplied by participants. Program still remains on	The new training was well received. Due to demand a further course for the year	Achieved

Respect: recognise and value the strengths of Indigenous cultures and identities to build an inclusive and positive workplace culture

Focus area: improving cultural awareness

Action	Target	Actual progress	Lessons learned	Stop light
training as part of the department's core training program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing a protocol for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgment of Country for use at key departmental events • developing cultural guidelines about when, why and how to incorporate Indigenous cultural practices, celebrations and images into activities, events, facilities and corporate communications. 	training program. Make improvements as required by monitoring the level of attendance and feedback.	departmental core training list. As a direct result of discussions with the working group a new training program was initiated under the Indigenous cultural awareness banner titled 'Issues affecting Indigenous Australians', delivered by an Indigenous staff member. First session was held in March 2011 and the second session was held in May 2011.	was incorporated into the training calendar. The department will continue to promote and develop training during the process of reviewing and refining the RAP.	
	Protocol for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country developed and used at key departmental events.	Protocol for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of country completed in July 2010 and placed on intranet. Further article 'Acknowledging the traditional custodians' promoting the use of Acknowledgement of Country was highlighted on the intranet in April 2011. Laminated cards encouraging the use of Acknowledgement of Country have been placed on lecterns.	Need to continue promoting awareness to ensure all staff are aware of the protocols. Will continue to promote on the intranet.	Achieved
	Development and implementation of cultural guidelines that give guidance on when, why and how to incorporate Indigenous cultural practices, celebrations and images into activities, events, facilities and corporate communications.	Guidelines are in the final drafting stages.	Consultations with other agencies were extremely beneficial in drafting our own guidelines.	On track

Opportunities: promote recruitment, retention and development and support Indigenous Australians to develop the skills and abilities the department requires to deliver its business outcomes

Focus area: continue and improve existing programs to boost departmental Indigenous staff recruitment, retention and development

Action	Target	Actual progress	Lessons learned	Stop light	
<p>Continue to implement the department's Indigenous Employment Plan (located on the internet at www.dbcde.gov.au then go to careers>employment benefits)</p> <p>It aims to improve the department's ability to attract, select and retain Indigenous Australians and assist their career development in the Australian Public Service.</p>	<p>Increase Indigenous staffing levels to a minimum two per cent of total staff by 2013.</p>	<p>The department participated in Indigenous graduate and trainee selection process in 2010 however, no additional Indigenous staff resulted.</p> <p>As at 30 June 2010 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff comprised 1.3 per cent of total staff. As at June 2011 this figure was 0.9 per cent.</p>	<p>In the refreshed RAP this action is being reworked to reflect the COAG departmental target of 2.7 per cent Indigenous employment numbers by 2015.</p>	On track	
	<p>Include a statement on the department's careers web page that actively encourages applications from Indigenous Australians.</p> <p>Promote employment opportunities through Indigenous media including http://www.indigenousjobsaustralia.com.au</p>	<p>Completed—statement on department careers web page.</p> <p>Utilised www.indigenousjobsaustralia.com.au</p>			Achieved
	<p>Provide a mentor to all entry-level Indigenous employees, if required.</p>	<p>Achieved and promoted in the departments Indigenous Employment Plan.</p>			Achieved
<p>Participate in Australian Public Service (APS) Indigenous Graduates program and Traineeship program.</p>	<p>The department's annual graduate intake has a minimum of one Indigenous graduate sourced from the APS Indigenous Graduates program.</p> <p>The department's trainee intake has a minimum of two Indigenous trainees sourced from the APS Indigenous Trainee Program every 18 months (noting that the APS programs commence every six months and are 18 months in duration).</p>	<p>The department assisted (and participated in selection panel) in the recruitment process for Indigenous graduate and trainee programs for 2011. Four offers were made but all were declined.</p>	<p>Continue to follow recruitment process and promote department.</p>	On track	
<p>Support Indigenous staff to participate in internal training and development programs as well as APS Indigenous programs.</p>	<p>Training and development opportunities are well promoted and Indigenous staff are encouraged and supported to attend.</p>	<p>The department's training calendar is widely promoted through the intranet, television in the foyer, email correspondence and the HR monthly newsletter.</p> <p>Indigenous staff are directly</p>	<p>Continue to promote internal training within the department.</p> <p>Staff across the department are happy with the amount of training opportunities available.</p>	Achieved	

Opportunities: promote recruitment, retention and development and support Indigenous Australians to develop the skills and abilities the department requires to deliver its business outcomes

Focus area: continue and improve existing programs to boost departmental Indigenous staff recruitment, retention and development

Action	Target	Actual progress	Lessons learned	Stop light
		informed of relevant APS programs and are encouraged to attend.		
	Indigenous staff provide feedback annually to the Human Resources section about training opportunities offered by the department and their experience in accessing training. Feedback is acted on, as appropriate.	Feedback is requested from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and all other staff and is acted upon where required. Example—a review of the department’s Indigenous Cultural Awareness training was undertaken at end of 2010 following on from feedback supplied by participants. An action undertaken resulting from the review was a new training program titled ‘Issues affecting Indigenous Australians’ which was delivered by an Indigenous staff member.	The department’s process of evaluation has been effective in enabling Indigenous staff to offer feedback on training opportunities in the department. Will continue to promote and develop training during the process of review and refining the RAP.	Achieved
	Entry-level Indigenous employees will attend mandatory training in line with the requirements of their particular programs.	This target was met.		Achieved
	Indigenous staff are encouraged and supported to attend APS programs and events, as well as join networks such as the Indigenous APS Employee’s Network and the APSC ‘Career Trek’ training.	Indigenous employees are encouraged to participate in the programs offered by APSC and any correspondence is distributed to all Indigenous employees.		Achieved
	Monitor number of participants attending APSC programs, networks and events.	All information on programs, networks and events is distributed to Indigenous staff for their attendance.	Monitoring of all attendance has been difficult as staff are not required to advise a central area within the Department that attendance was undertaken. Will look at when reviewing and refining the RAP.	On track

Tracking progress and reporting

Action	Target	Actual Progress	Lessons Learned	Stop Light
<p>Annual performance report on the plan prepared by the department and provided to Reconciliation Australia. Summary of plan progress included in the 2010-11 Annual Report and the 2011-12 Annual Report.</p> <p>Review and refresh the plan in July 2011.</p> <p>Review the plan in July 2012 and put a new plan endorsed by Reconciliation Australia in place following expiry of this plan.</p>	<p>Performance report on the plan completed and provided to Reconciliation Australia and published on both Reconciliation Australia's and the department's website.</p>	<p>Achieved in 2011</p>		<p>Achieved</p>
	<p>Summary of progress of the implementation of the plan is included in the Annual Report in 2011 and 2012.</p>	<p>Achieved in 2011</p>		<p>Achieved</p>
	<p>The plan is reviewed and refreshed by end July 2011 and a new plan endorsed by Reconciliation Australia is put in place following expiry of the current plan in June 2012.</p>	<p>Currently being reviewed and refreshed—on target to be achieved by August 2011</p>	<p>Some of the actions and targets in the RAP have been reviewed and or removed due to advice received from Reconciliation Australia to not include initiatives that relate to 'core business'. These will be taken into account during the process of reviewing, refining and refreshing the RAP for 2011-13.</p>	<p>On track</p>
<p>Working group to meet every three months to discuss progress against the plan actions and ensure the plan is 'on track' in preparation for annual reporting and refresh of the plan in July.</p>	<p>Working group meetings organised every three month commencing July 2010. Working group to meet to undertake annual refresh due July 2011.</p>	<p>Four meetings have taken place. Three full working group meetings plus one with working group representatives and Reconciliation Australia representative.</p>		<p>Achieved</p>
	<p>Parliamentary, Governance and Coordination Branch track plan progress based on meeting feedback and inform Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary Governance and Coordination Branch of progress.</p>	<p>Progress is being tracked by a table with information gathered from working group meetings and monitored by Coordination section.</p>	<p>This has been an invaluable tool, particularly when it utilised for reporting purposes.</p>	<p>Achieved</p>

Tracking progress and reporting

Action	Target	Actual Progress	Lessons Learned	Stop Light
Develop and implement a communications strategy to promote this Plan.	Communications strategy developed and implemented.	Completed in July 2010. More work to be done once the refreshed RAP is ready for release.	Continual awareness campaigns are necessary to encourage commitment to the RAP.	On track